

2024

Annual REPORT



Catholic
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Services

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Letter from the Executive Director
2	Letter from the Board President
3	Mission and Vision
4	Overview of Catholic Legal Services
5	Programs and Services
6	Complex Litigation Department
7	Refugee Assistance Program (Legal)
8	Special Projects
14	Naturalization Project
15	Immigration Court Help Desk
16	Family Group Legal Orientation Program
17	Legal Orientation Program for Custodians
18	Unaccompanied Children's Program
20	Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
21	Legal Access Services for Reunified Families
21	Children Legal Services
22	Fee for Service/Pro-Bono
22	National Qualified Representative Program
23	LABRE Program
25	Managed-Services Program
26	Broward Office
28	Serving the Servants Immigration Program
29	Board of Directors
30	Financials
32	A Message from the Chief Operating Officer



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RANDOLPH "RANDY" MCGRORTY, ESQ.

March 1, 2025

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, I am both proud and deeply grateful for the incredible journey of Catholic Legal Services (CLS). Your support and commitment to our mission have allowed us to continue transforming lives and strengthening communities.

Following the celebration of our 25th anniversary in 2023, we entered 2024 with renewed purpose. Over the past year, we have not only upheld our commitment to justice and service but have also expanded our reach, developed new programs, and adapted to the ever-changing landscape of immigration law and advocacy. Through these efforts, we have witnessed countless stories of resilience—stories of individuals and families who, with our support, have found stability, safety, and hope.

The past year has presented both challenges and opportunities. The shifting legal landscape and continued humanitarian crises have demanded innovative solutions, strategic advocacy, and steadfast dedication from our team. With your partnership, CLS has remained a source of hope for those seeking legal representation, protection, and pathways to a better future.

To our donors, volunteers, and community allies—thank you. Your belief in the power of justice and compassion has made it possible for us to provide critical legal services to the most vulnerable among us. Your generosity fuels our ability to stand with those who need us most.

As we look ahead, we are driven by a bold vision: to expand our impact, strengthen our programs, and continue advocating for a more just and compassionate world. With your continued support, we will build on our legacy of service, ensuring that every individual who walks through our doors finds not only legal assistance but also dignity, hope, and a brighter future.

Together, we will continue making a difference—one life, one case, one victory at a time.

With gratitude and resolve,



Randy McGrorty, Esq.

Executive Director

Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami, Inc.

rmgrorty@cclsmiami.org

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

JORDAN P. DOLLAR, ESQ.



March 1, 2025

Dear Supporters, Friends, and Beloved Community,

As we move forward into 2025, Catholic Legal Services (CLS) remains faithful in our commitment to delivering high-quality immigration legal services to the South Florida community. With each passing year, the importance of our work becomes even more evident, and our dedication to serving those in need remains unshakeable.

Our mission is rooted in the belief that every individual deserves dignity, justice, and an opportunity to build a better future. We continue to embrace the principle of welcoming the stranger as our neighbor, knowing that the strength of our community lies in its diversity, resilience, and shared humanity. Guided by the enduring lessons of faith, we strive to treat those who seek refuge and opportunity with the same respect and compassion that we would extend to our own families.

In the face of evolving immigration policies and the growing challenges faced by those seeking safety and stability, CLS stands as an anchor of hope and advocacy. Our dedicated team works tirelessly to provide expert legal counsel, humanitarian support, and a pathway to justice for thousands of individuals and families. None of this would be possible without you—our supporters, volunteers, and community partners—who make it possible for us to fulfill our mission each day.

To those who have stood with us, whether for years or just recently, thank you. Your generosity and commitment empower us to remain a reliable and accessible resource for those in need. With your continued support, we will persist in our efforts to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background, receive the assistance and protection they deserve.

As we look ahead, we reaffirm our promise to serve with compassion, advocate with determination, and stand firm in our pursuit of justice. Together, we will continue to make a meaningful impact—one case, one family, one life at a time.

With gratitude and continued commitment,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jordan P. Dollar'.

Jordan P. Dollar, Esq.

President, Board of Directors

Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami, Inc.



MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

- Legal representation and immigration services to those who come to South Florida from foreign lands.
- Professional assistance to those who lack sufficient means to obtain legal help; and
- Quality services without regard to faith, race, national origin, or any other distinguishing characteristic.

VISION

Catholic Legal Services is a non-profit agency that commits to justice and the alleviation of human misery through the promotion of the principle of equal access to the system of justice and the provision of legal services.

We focus exclusively on helping poor immigrants obtain asylum, establish legal residency, become citizens, reunite families and understand immigration law and policies by providing public education. As a provider of legal assistance and representation for immigrants, refugees, and impoverished people in South Florida, CLS provides a full range of immigration-related legal services, from initial advice, to assistance, to full representation, to a low-income clientele.

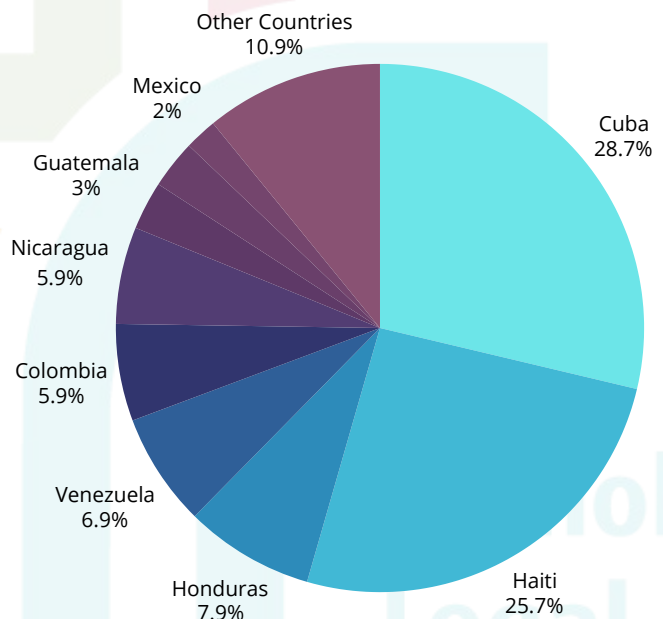
"The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty."— Pope Francis, World Youth Day, Rio de Janeiro, July 25, 2013

OVERVIEW OF CATHOLIC LEGAL SERVICES

Incorporated in 1998, Catholic Charities Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami, Inc. (hereafter "CCLS") is a nationally recognized agency with an experienced team of attorneys and immigration professionals whose mission is to provide professional legal services, both application assistance and attorney representation before the Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Immigration Courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals, to those who come from foreign lands who lack sufficient means to obtain representation without regard to faith or national origin. In addition to its professional competencies, CCLS' staff reflects the diversity of the population it serves, allowing for culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate services.

In 2024, nearly 50,000 people visited CCLS in search of competent and compassion legal support as they navigated through their complex immigration journeys. CCLS staff provided more than 33,700 services to more than 13,500 clients from 114 different countries and territories.

Country	Total	Percent
Cuba	9,902	29%
Haiti	8,867	26%
Honduras	2,549	8%
Venezuela	2,314	7%
Colombia	2,053	6%
Nicaragua	1,864	6%
Guatemala	1,118	3%
Peru	895	3%
Mexico	531	2%
Other Countries	3,640	11%



"We became not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams." — President Jimmy Carter

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



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Complex Litigation Department

In May 2024, Catholic Charities Legal Services opened its first Complex Litigation Department (“CLD”). The program's objective is to provide high quality legal representation while tackling complicated issues such as human rights and due process abuses. The team consists of highly skilled and dynamic lawyers experienced in various areas of the law. Going toe-to-toe with the government, CLD lawyers have years of robust complex immigration litigation and business experience. The team is deeply committed to protecting the rights of vulnerable populations, advancing the law, and promoting freedom, justice, and safety for those seeking refuge and protection from persecution and violence.

CLD is responsible for managing appellate cases at USCIS, EOIR, and BIA, and is beginning its work with the U.S. District Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals. Although it is a newly established program, the team has addressed a diverse array of legal matters, including issues related to freedom of the press, human trafficking, visa adjustments, violations of due process, and instances where respondents are deemed incompetent to proceed with individual trials without legal representation. Since May, the team has received numerous referrals from detention facilities, such as Krome and Broward Transitional Center, both of which report a considerable number of due process complaints. Cases involving vulnerable populations or due process concerns are prioritized. The team provides assistance to both adults and unaccompanied minors facing removal proceedings.

Issues that have been litigated this year include a transgender individual being held at an all-male detention center; false allegations of communist party membership for Cubans seeking to adjust; and the issuance of parole documents to Cubans enrolled in the Migrant Protection Program. In addition, CCLS is now filing complex change of status applications for F-1, students as well as labor certifications, employment-based visas, and adjustments.

Most recently, given the recent swift changes in the immigration landscape made by the new administration; changes that could fundamentally alter established immigration laws and procedures, the team launched a project aimed at equipping CCLS staff and clients with accurate and timely information on immigration-related developments as they arise. CLD is developing a comprehensive index of all executive orders, laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures affecting the process to alert the staff and clients of the challenges they may face and provide a suite of resources to keep clients notified and prepared for changes in migration law and policy.



Refugee Assistance Program (Legal)

Florida has a long history of welcoming refugees and others fleeing violence and persecution in their homeland. It is home to a growing number of newcomers—including countless fleeing Cuba and Haiti, who are eligible to receive certain federally-funded services for new arrivals that promote economic self-sufficiency and community flourishing.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, directly funds local communities' efforts to provide core integration services to newcomer populations, including Cuban and Haitian refugees. In Fiscal Year 2024, Florida received \$1.2 billion in resettlement resources to support communities welcoming newcomers. That represents an increase of 21.14% in resources from 2023.

In Florida, the Refugee Assistance Program funded by ORR is administered by the Department of Children & Families, who contracted with Youth Co-O, Inc. to offer such services. CCLS's program provides employment-related immigration services to refugees, asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, and others. Thanks to this program, we can offer a broad scope of legal services to people from Haiti and Cuba. These services cover a wide range of actions, from filing FOIA requests to ascertain the facts and procedural history of the individual's immigration matter—to providing thorough legal representation in asylum cases; assisting an individual in adjusting their status to that of lawful permanent resident and completing their migration journey by applying for naturalization.

The humanitarian parole program for qualifying Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans announced in January 2023, continued active in 2024. Throughout the year, CCLS assisted many migrants from those countries, with those in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties eligible to be serviced under our program. Redesignation of Haiti for TPS was announced in 2024, and many Haitian nationals, such as those paroled into the U.S., or in removal proceedings were able to file for TPS through this program.

In 2024, CCLS successfully delivered 4,108 services under the Refugee Assistance Program, representing a 50.20% increase over the number of services provided in 2024. ORR programs pay for themselves. A February 2024 report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that the fiscal impact of refugees and asylees was significantly favorable at \$123.8 billion. The estimated net fiscal benefit to the federal government was \$31.5 billion; with an estimated \$92.3 billion profit to state and local governments.

SUCCESS STORY



Mayelin* and her son came to the U.S. through Miami International Airport in 2015. They entered with their residency card, established themselves in Miami, FL adapted to their new lives. After nearly 10 years of life in the U.S., Mayelin decided to become a US Citizen. In February, 2024, she came into the CLS Miami office where she was helped with the N-400, and provided with the questions she needed to study for her naturalization interview. Even though English was her second language, Mayelin studied the questions for months, appeared for her citizenship test/interview in August, 2024, and passed! Mayelin credits the assistance and encouragement provided by CCLS for her naturalization process success. Today, Mayelin is a proud U.S. citizen, beyond grateful to CCLS for its work and support.

** AI-generated images; names changed for privacy.*

Special Projects

A Hub in Little Haiti: Haitian Creole Language Services at Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church

This hub office at Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church in Little Haiti serves as a fully operational community-based immigration services center or same comprehensive services available at our main office. From initial intake to citizenship applications and everything in between, individuals can access a full range of immigration legal assistance tailored to their needs.

At this location, CCLS provides pro bono services through grant-funded programs for those who qualify, ensuring that vulnerable populations receive critical legal support at no cost. For individuals who do not meet grant eligibility requirements but still need assistance, a minimal low bono fee structure is available, making legal services accessible and affordable. This strategic approach ensures that all clients, regardless of financial status, receive the guidance and representation they need as they navigate the complex immigration system.

This program holds immense significance, as Notre Dame d'Haiti is where CCLS first began its mission 30 years ago. Returning to serve this community represents a full-circle moment, reaffirming our commitment to giving back to the very people who were at the heart of our organization's foundation.



Cassy Pierre, DOJ-Representative:

The Notre Dame program is my favorite part of CLS. I began working at CLS at the start of Haiti TPS in 2010, first as a volunteer at Notre Dame and later as a staff member. During that time, we were assisting individuals with their TPS applications, ensuring they had the support they needed. Now, as the program supervisor, I truly love helping people. Having a full-service program in a location that is convenient for many makes a significant difference, and I'm grateful to be part of it.

Haitian Creole Know Your Right Presentation (Legal Orientation)

CCLS conducted KYR presentations Two to three times a month that served 25-40 migrants each session, averaging 70-100 participants a month. The KYR provides legal screenings, intakes, legal orientations, friend of court services, individual consultations and pro se assistance to thousands of Haitian migrants facing removal without legal representation in Immigration Court or who must report to Immigration Customs Enforcement ("ICE"). The KYR also provides referrals to social services around the community.

The Know Your Rights (KYR) sessions are conducted in the office. Following the KYR session, individuals who wish to consult with an attorney have the opportunity to receive a consultation on the same day or schedule one for a later date. Hosting the KYR sessions in the office facilitates easy access to legal consultations.



Deborah Saint-Vil, Esq. Supervising Attorney:

Conducting the Know Your Rights (KYR) sessions is one of my favorite aspects of working at CCLS. I have been leading these sessions for years, and I never tire of it. It brings me so much joy to see the light in clients' eyes when they finally understand the immigration process and realize that relief, which they didn't know existed, is available to them. Many individuals receive misinformation from various sources, and participating in a KYR session provides a sense of relief. It's like interactive teaching, presented in a way that resonates with them in their own language. What brings me even more joy is seeing returning clients. Although the KYR is ideally a one-time session, I love when clients return because they didn't fully grasp some information the first time, or they want to clarify something. It's fulfilling to know that they are taking the initiative to ensure they have a full understanding, and it reinforces the importance of the services we provide.

"Only a life lived in the service to others is worth living."

— **Albert Einstein**

Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

In 2024, several countries received extensions and redesignations for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), allowing eligible individuals to apply for renewal or initial registration:

- **Haiti:** On June 28, 2024, the Department of Homeland Security announced an 18-month extension and redesignation of TPS for Haiti, effective from August 4, 2024, through February 3, 2026.
- **Yemen:** On July 8, 2024, an 18-month extension and redesignation of TPS for Yemen was announced, effective from September 4, 2024, through March 3, 2026.
- **Somalia:** An 18-month extension and redesignation of TPS for Somalia was announced, effective from September 18, 2024, through March 17, 2026.

This announcement made hundreds of thousands of individuals eligible for TPS renewal and initial registration, significantly impacting our community.

CCLS conducted outreach to inform individuals about their eligibility to file for TPS and various other immigration benefits. We registered TPS-eligible clients through our virtual and in-person clinics and in our various offices. We also provided TPS registration assistance at our satellite location at Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church in Little Haiti, a location particularly convenient for the Haitian community. At Notre Dame approximately 75% of the clients we served were Haitian, but we also assisted individuals from other TPS-designated countries.

CIRCLE Services:



At the end of 2023, CCLS secured a contract renewal, allowing us to continue the CIRCLE Program. In September 2024, CCLS was once again awarded a grant by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners. This Immigration Services program originated from a previous grant that was exclusively dedicated to providing TPS-related services to Miami-Dade County residents. Recognizing the growing demand for a wider range of immigration services, CCLS successfully advocated for the program's expansion to include general immigration services, such as free legal consultations.

Through this initiative, CCLS developed **Community Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship, and Lawful Employability Services (CIRCLE Services)**—a comprehensive program that integrates community education, legal screenings, targeted legal assistance in clinic settings, and direct representation for Miami-Dade County residents. The project provides education, counseling, and legal support to eligible immigrants who have a pathway under current law to obtain immigration benefits, refugee status, citizenship, or lawful employability.

With the support of our seven funded partners—**AIJ, HUF, FANM, HLA, FLIC, MWC, SANT LA**—and one unfunded partner, **ONA**, we have surpassed our target goals by over 200% in every aspect of the program. Throughout the year, in collaboration with our partners, we have served over **2,047 individuals across 72 clinics countywide**. Additionally, in our office, we have provided assistance to over **3,403 individuals of various nationalities** and completed more than **3,394 applications**.

Virtual TPS and EAD Clinics

The collaborative hosts quarterly TPS clinics based on the needs of the community. We offered a hybrid model for virtual and in-person services during the clinic to make the services accessible to a wider demographic. The collaborative serves all TPS-eligible nationalities, including, but not limited to, Cameroon, Haiti, Venezuela, and Ukraine.

Miami-Dade County Immigration Clinics

The CIRCLE collaborative hosts quarterly in-person immigration clinics. We have been hosting these clinics in different districts throughout Miami-Dade County. We have provided legal reviews for partner organizations, consultation, and training for legal volunteers on-site and virtually during those clinics.

CLS has completed more than a thousand TPS applications and/or TPS-related services individually and with our partners.



Client Testimony:

I came to Catholic Legal Services desperately seeking help with my asylum case I had filed since 2023, but the IJ never received it. Therefore, I couldn't take advantage of the five-year work permit under asylum because I had no EAD clock running. I was so worried I would not be able to work as my one-year work permit would expire soon. With the help of attorney, Carolyn and Onel, they helped me contacted the court on her behalf and Onel also requested a FOIA which revealed my asylum application to send to the right IJ. Thet helped me run the clock and today I have 152 days. Onel scheduled me on this Friday to come file my work permit under asylum. I am so excited and grateful for their service.

** AI-generated images; names changed for privacy.*



Onel Joseph, Senior Paralegal:

I work as a paralegal for the Circle program doing primarily outreach at Notre Dame on a weekly basis. I really enjoy working with clients and the different partners. Circle outreach events really change many families' lives and most importantly we go meet them where they are.

Joseph Caleb Center / Accion Action Community Center

Each week, we provided off-site immigration services at various locations, including the Joseph Caleb Center, as well as additional sites designated or requested by our collaborative partners. These off-site services ensured accessibility for individuals who may not have been able to visit our main office.

In June 2024, our operations expanded with a strategic move to the **Accion Community Center**, further increasing our outreach and impact. To enhance service delivery, CCLS deployed two legal professionals—either a paralegal and an attorney or two attorneys—ensuring that multiple individuals could be assisted simultaneously. This expansion significantly increased the number of individuals we were able to serve, providing timely and critical immigration services to those in need. By broadening our presence and staffing at these locations, we strengthened our ability to meet the growing demand for legal assistance within the community.



Witson Locean, Paralegal:

I truly enjoyed my experience serving at Accion, as it allowed me to directly impact the lives of individuals navigating immigration-related challenges. It was incredibly rewarding to assist community members in obtaining crucial resources such as Social Security numbers and employment authorization, which empowered them to secure employment and provide for their families. Additionally, Accion created a light for victims of all forms of abuse, offering a safe space for individuals to come forward and seek assistance.



Client Testimony:

My name is Valerie, and I'm originally from Venezuela. After my student visa expired, I lost my legal status and didn't know where to turn—until I met Witson at ACCION. With his help, I obtained TPS and work authorization, allowing me to begin my career. Later, as my husband and I applied for Adjustment of Status, Witson guided us through every step. Thanks to his support, I'm now a permanent resident and finally building the future I dreamed of.

** AI-generated images; names changed for privacy.*

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CITY OF NORTH MIAMI GRANT

In the first half of 2024, CCLS successfully completed the **North Miami Small Grant** program, exceeding the required service goals by over **150%**. Later in the year, we were awarded an **extremely small grant** specifically dedicated to serving victims of crime. During the first half of the year, we were able to bring services directly to the community, meeting clients at libraries and other accessible locations within North Miami. Although the initial grant has ended, this new initiative is particularly significant as it allows us to assist victims of crime, including survivors of **domestic violence, human trafficking, and other qualifying crimes**.

This program is especially critical because the individuals we serve are among the most vulnerable—many are undocumented, victims of crime, and often overlooked. Providing them with legal assistance and support can be life-changing, helping them secure immigration relief and protection.

Since July 2023, CCLS has partnered with the **City of North Miami** to address immigration challenges faced by local residents. By establishing a **weekly presence in the City**, we significantly improved accessibility and convenience for individuals seeking immigration assistance. Although we are no longer physically present in North Miami since June 2024, we continue to serve a significant population from the area. Our commitment to providing legal assistance remains strong, and we continue to support residents through various channels, ensuring they still have access to the vital services they need.

CCLS staff conducting intakes with North Miami residents at the City North Miami Library.



Anthony Tadal, Paralegal:

It was a pleasure assisting the North Miami community. North Miami has a huge Haitian population and it was great assisting them with their immigration needs. It was great to hear the feed back from the clients that they enjoyed the services we provided, and especially that we were located in North Miami since it can be extremely difficult for most of them to come get help from our downtown office.

"If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path."

— **Buddha**

Naturalization Project

At Catholic Legal Services, we are dedicated to empowering individuals on their journey to U.S. citizenship. As the site leader for the New Americans Campaign (NAC) Miami, we play a central role in guiding eligible lawful permanent residents (LPRs) through the naturalization process, providing essential legal assistance and resources.

Miami New Americans Campaign (Miami NAC)



The NAC, a nationwide coalition of immigration organizations, aims to increase citizenship applications among the over nine million eligible LPRs. Through our leadership role, CCLS connects individuals with trusted legal support and vital information to simplify the path to naturalization. Each year, the Miami NAC hosts the Naturalization Mega Event, bringing together our community to support individuals in their citizenship journey. This clinic included virtual and hybrid sessions, as well as in-person clinics at key locations, including Barry University and faith-based institutions like Tabernacle of Glory and Sinai SDA Church. The four-day event ensured that naturalization was made more accessible.

Fast Track to Citizenship Program

In partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS), CCLS also offers the Fast Track to Citizenship Program, a grant-funded initiative designed to increase access to citizenship education. In 2024, eligible participants across several campus locations received intensive citizenship education and application preparation, empowering them to navigate the complex naturalization process with confidence.

Through these initiatives, CCLS continues to lead efforts in providing accessible, effective services that guide individuals towards achieving U.S. citizenship.

Immigration Court Help Desk

This court-based educational program is implemented by the EOIR to improve the efficiency of immigration court hearings by increasing access to information and raising the level of representation for individuals appearing pro se before the EOIR/BIA. In the interest of the efficiency and protection of fundamental rights of respondents appearing pro se before the Immigration Judges, ICH educates and provides limited legal advice to non-detained pro se respondents in removal proceedings about the immigration court process and dynamics. ICH provides individuals with the tools to make informed decisions about their legal cases. The program provides legal orientations (GIS, IIS and SHW), friend of court services, intake clinics, pro-bono attorney referral and placement, outreach, and pro-se assistance in completing motions and forms of relief to serve around 300,000 pro se respondents appearing in the Miami Immigration Court.

In 2024, ICH - administered by CLS in Miami – served around 6000 participants. ICH has in person services at the Miami Immigration Court two times a week and has in person services at CLS offices in Miami and Hollywood but continues to provide some of its services remotely through electronic documents, applications, and video conferencing.

Type of Service	Number of Sessions
Group Information Sessions / “Know Your Rights” Presentations (KYRs)	402
Self-Help Workshops	53
Individual Information Sessions	5847
Friend of Court	252

As part of the services rendered, ICH got a grant of a motion to reopen in absentia for someone with an IQ of 65 and CLS has offered legal representation to her to provide at least one safeguard.

Family Group Legal Orientation Program

Like our Immigration Court Help Desk program, the Family Group Legal Orientation Program (“FGLOP”) provides legal orientations (MFGO, SFGO and SHW), friend of court services, pro-bono attorney referral and placement, outreach, and pro-se assistance in completing motions and forms of relief to serve families. In 2024, the Miami Immigration Court had almost 22,135 dedicated docket cases, most of who are from Honduras, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Ecuador and some Brazilians. In 2024, FGLOP served over 92 families. The dynamics on Dedicated Docket are fast paced because immigration judges are supposed to render a decision on asylum claims within 300 days and counted from their first Master hearing.

In both ICH and FGLOP programs, CLS authorized providers assist immigration courts with effective and efficient case management as Friend of the Court (under FOTC program). As such, they are a valuable tool to the immigration judges, assisting pro se respondents in navigating the complex immigration court system, and thereby creating greater efficiency and fairness by helping respondents to better understand court proceedings and ensure maintenance of a clear understanding of their rights, obligations, and relief for which they may be eligible.

As part of the FGLOP services rendered, we were able to get reopen a case for a young girl who was placed on the dedicated docket with her mother. The girl’s mother later left the country and left the girl in the care of her father without giving them any information on the girl’s case. The young girl was ordered removed in absentia because her mother did not appear in court on the date of the hearing.

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Legal Orientation Program for Custodians



Legal Orientation Program for Custodians (“LOPC”) who have been released from the Office of Refugee Resettlement custody and are currently in immigration court proceedings and cannot afford an attorney. The goals of the LOPC are to (1) educate custodians on their role and responsibilities, the immigration process, and potential forms of relief, and (2) protect children from mistreatment, exploitation, and harm.

In 2024, we served more than 668 children with individual orientations; 56 children with legal screenings particularly targeting trafficking, mistreatment, and exploitation concerns; and placed 41 children with pro bono attorneys. We reached more than 431 children, in addition to their custodians, in our Know Your Rights presentations. Since the LOPC deals with vulnerable populations who have been victims of abuse and trauma, we served over 30 children with non-legal referrals in areas such as therapy, health care, food aid, school enrollment, and rent assistance.

Our office continues to maintain the most developed Friend of the Court (FOTC) Program in the U.S. at the Miami Immigration Court for dedicated immigration judges that handle juvenile dockets. During these juvenile dockets, unaccompanied alien children are scheduled to appear in their removal proceedings. Our program serves unrepresented unaccompanied children by providing pro-se court services such as change of address, change of venue, and calling attention to law or facts that may have escaped consideration. In 2024, we appeared as FOTC for more than 63 children. Notably, with the implementation of EOIR-61, Notice of Entry of Limited Appearance for Document Assistance Before the Immigration Court, LOPC has been able to even advocate for prosecutorial discretion and termination, thereby taking a significant number of children with collateral relief off the dockets before their hearing date arrives.

Unaccompanied Children's Program

The Unaccompanied Children's Program ("UCP") team represents hundreds of children in removal proceedings. We believe that children should not have to face the complex and confusing U.S. immigration system alone. Our clients crossed the Southern border without their parent(s) and, after being processed by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, have been released to family and/or friends in South Florida. We seek to represent our clients as zealously and holistically as possible, providing them with top-notch legal service and connecting them with our outstanding social services department.

Because of the generosity of our grant, we can offer the children free, comprehensive legal representation before the immigration court, USCIS, and the Board of Immigration Appeals, for the duration of their case. All our clients are given the opportunity to work with our social services coordinator, who helps them navigate their new realities. In addition to providing mental health services, our social service coordinator also assists our clients with securing food, housing, drivers' licenses, and appropriate individualized educational plans.

In 2024, our team extended offers of free, full legal representation to 75 children, and filed more than 200 applications for immigration relief and benefits, including asylum, special immigrant juvenile status, temporary protected status, and work authorization. This past year we set a goal to get as many of the children's cases out of the immigration court as possible through requests for prosecutorial discretion and motions to terminate. Our success in meeting that goal means that our clients no longer have to report to immigration court.

In December, in partnership with This Is About Humanity and other South Florida community partners, we held our fourth annual Holiday Party for our clients and their families. Together, UCP team staff members and their clients played games, opened gifts, shared a meal, and took pictures with Santa and his elves, making great memories along the way.



The LOPC pro bono program and outreach officially expanded with a LOPC attorney becoming the CCLS Pro Bono Coordinator. In 2024, LOPC partnered with two private firms, Kobra & Kim and Winston & Strawn, through which LOPC hosted sessions for Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit to educate private attorneys on immigration law on asylums, special immigrant juvenile visas, U-visas, T-visas, or state court proceedings. After these thorough trainings, LOPC served as mentors for private attorneys who proceeded to assist in pro se workshops by preparing asylum applications for unaccompanied children. Aside from these partnerships and the pro bono attorneys already working with our office, LOPC's outreach efforts have grown in 2024 with mentoring and training five new pro bono attorneys and placed seven cases with private attorneys in the community, not including the more than 35 cases placed with our in-house counsels at CCLS. We are confident these partnerships will continue to develop and flourish as the need for legal representation for unaccompanied children continues to increase. Lastly, since Miami EOIR holds the largest juvenile docket in the nation, and immigration courts do not provide pro bono counsel to indigent respondents, LOPC has become the point of contact for research and legislation work on the treatment of unaccompanied children in immigration court. In 2024, a former Florida Supreme Court Justice visited the Miami LOPC, observed our FOTC Program, and engaged in conversations with LOPC and EOIR about future policy work on a universal representation model for children and the treatment of children in removal proceedings. In addition, a LOPC attorney, Maitte Barrientos, was invited to speak at a panel in front of congressional members about prosecutorial discretion and special immigrant juvenile visas in Washington, D.C



"There is nothing more beautiful than someone who goes out of their way to make life beautiful for others."

—Mandy Hale

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program (“URMP”) is designed to meet the needs of children from other countries whose circumstances require foster care support services because their families are either temporarily or permanently unavailable due to political circumstances, economic hardship, or abandonment, or they are unable or unwilling to provide parental care and supervision.

The goal of the URMP is to successfully resettle each URM by providing URMs with the same range of child welfare services, benefits, and protections available to other children in Florida’s foster care system, including its road-to-independence program. The program provides substitute living arrangements and culturally sensitive services to achieve a balance between ethnic identity and adaptation to a new socio-cultural community. Upon release into our program, these children are represented by our attorneys in dependency court in Miami-Dade County, and all the children in this program are guaranteed to have a route to citizenship. We are one of the few programs nationwide that assists these URM’s on an emergency basis – to avoid any detention by ICE once they turn eighteen. These youths are then eligible for extended foster care after their 18th birthday. We represent them before USCIS and before the EOIR.

The URMP is a program that can help youths from all over the world including Haiti, Venezuela, Guatemala, Nepal, El Salvador, and Thailand to name a few. In 2024, we had approximately 41 URMP cases – both new and old – and all the URMs were granted or are pending the grant of their immigration benefits. None of the URMs actively in our program are facing removal due to our legal representation. URMP attorneys also engages in research for publications such that every year Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook, the leading legal reference on U.S. immigration law, requests our expertise and feedback on the sections pertaining to URMP and special immigrant juvenile visas.

"We have a moral responsibility to protect the earth and ensure that our children and grandchildren have a healthy and sustainable environment in which to live." — Jim Clyburn

Legal Access Services for Reunified Families

Previously known as the Children Legal Services Gra Legal Access Services for Reunified Families (“LASRF”) is a new program for class members of the Ms. L v ICE litigation, which includes families that were separated at the border during the Zero Tolerance Policy. CLS Miami assists class members and their families who primarily reside in Florida, Puerto Rico, and the USVI and may provide remote assistance.

Under the Settlement Agreement, the LASRF provides a variety of pro se services to class members, including filing of initial parole or re-parole and other pro se services such as individual consultations, friend of the Court, pro se I-589 Applications for Asylum, pro bono referrals, motion assistance and non-legal referrals such as referrals for mental health services, medical services and housing. In 2024, we assisted roughly 75 participants. LASRF is the smallest program at CLS Miami with a staff of 3 people, but they have helped many families who were separated at the border have access to legal services.

Children Legal Services (Funding Florida Legal Aid)

Children’s Legal Services is a catch-all grant that allows our office to provide legal assistance to immigrant youth who do not meet the eligibility requirements under other programs to close the gap of the unmet need of legal representation for the children in removal proceedings in South Florida. The mission of this program is to provide legal assistance to children in critical areas which affect their safety, well-being, and future development. Our representation consists of advocating for custody and placement in either family court, probate court, or children’s court and then filing relief and representing these children before USCIS and EOIR, and obtaining U-visa, T-visa, asylum and SIJ status to vulnerable children. We have represented immigrant kids in dependency, family, and even probate court to obtain permanency in the form of adoption, custody, and guardianships. In just the first half of the grant period in the second half of 2024, our office represented approximately 65 children, in addition to their derivative family members. Through these cases, we have helped teens who have been persecuted on account of their sexual identity and orientation have been able to seek and prevail on special immigrant juvenile designations thanks to the help of our zealous representation. Our office has successfully advocated for employment document authorizations so that children can have identification, a social security number, and avoid being extorted or fall victim of forced labor within the United States. This grant directly contributes to direct and indirect representation of unaccompanied children in Florida, which makes CCLS a very community-facing organization that pivots to whatever the current community needs may be when the time comes.

Fee For Service/Pro-Bono

The Fee For Service program provides low cost and free legal services for clients who do not qualify under one of the agency's many grants. During calendar year 2024 the Fee For Service ("FFS") program provided direct legal services to clients seeking employment authorization, attorney consultations, and temporary protected status. The FFS program also did a significant number of family-based petitions. In total, we provided more than 80 different types of services under the Fee for Service program during 2024. Many of the services are still in progress.

The program represents individuals in removal proceedings, including bond hearings. In one case, a Nicaraguan national was detained at Broward Transitional Center. He was arrested by ICE after allegedly failing to provide a motorcycle endorsed license. He was separated from his family, including his U.S. citizen wife and two minor daughters. Our team quickly prepared a bond request with the immigration court and were able to successfully obtain a bond on his behalf.

While most of the clients the program serves can afford a nominal fee for our services, building capacity to assist clients on a Pro-Bono basis would help reach those who are truly and completely destitute. We can accomplish that goal through the generous support of our donors and funders.

National Qualified Representative Program

The "NQRP" is a public defender model for detained individuals found to be incompetent. It helps those who lack the capacity to help themselves. One client our office represented was deathly afraid of returning to Haiti. However, it was very difficult for him to articulate this fear. Our team was able to hire experts to better understand his story and his fear of returning to Haiti. The judge, relying mostly on these experts' testimony, granted his asylum claim. We receive approximately two dozen appointments per year. The NQRP provides the necessary safeguards, procedural protections, and guarantees the overall fairness of removal proceedings for one of our most vulnerable clients.

Resilience and Victory Beyond Bars STORY



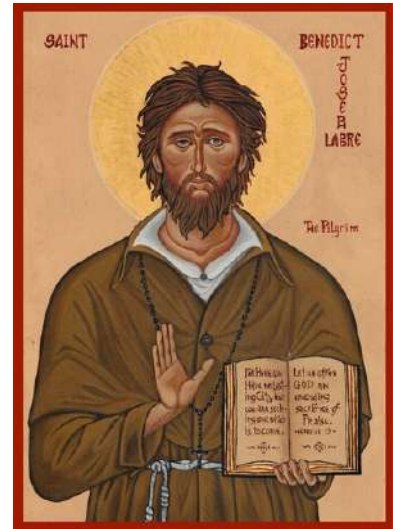
Gamboay, came to the U.S. as a refugee and later adjusted his status. Drama with the mother of his child found him behind bars, sitting in jail, after she attempted to run him over. As many accused individuals do after waiting for trial for long periods of time while incarcerated, he accepted a plea deal. However, his plea rendered him removable and limited his options to remain in the U.S. Now facing removal at Krome SPC, our office was appointed to represent Gamboay after the judge found indicia of incompetency. We receive about two dozen appointments per year. Through zealous advocacy, our office was able to successfully withhold Gamboay's removal. The NQRP provided Gamboay with the necessary safeguards, procedural protections, and guaranteed the overall fairness of removal proceedings.*

* AI-generated images; names changed for privacy.

LABRE Program

Expanding far beyond its humble origins as a small homeless outreach program, The Labre Project has become a vital part of CCLS's community outreach. Boasting of a team of 9 dedicated legal professionals, The Labre Project represents some of South Florida's most vulnerable individuals.

Taking inspiration from the life of St. Benedict Joseph Labre, The Labre Project was founded to serve the immigration needs of the homeless in South Florida. The program represents clients before the Immigration Court, USCIS, and ICE across various shelters. Attorneys and paralegals currently provide direct services at Camillus House, Chapman Partnership, and Lotus House, in addition to receiving unhoused clients in the office on Mondays and Tuesdays in the main downtown office.



The Labre Project also serves the medically vulnerable who have immigration legal needs. For example, the program helps individuals living abroad apply for humanitarian paroles when seeking life-saving medical treatments in the United States. The team also represents individuals in removal proceedings who have mental-health issues and victims of crime.

The Labre Project provides Legal Orientations at Corpus Christi Catholic Church, a parish community that is home to many immigrant families. Twice a month, The Labre Project provides orientations and direct services onsite at the parish with a dedicated team of lay volunteers.

In 2024, The Labre Project provided over 3,500 services, including 700 attorney consultations, 400 FOIA Requests, 43 residency applications, 110 asylum applications, and 600 work permits.



As many clients have told us, “Without my ID card, I can’t get my disability benefits, and I could even lose my house.” Continuing this important work is essential for making sure that the Miami-Dade Homeless Community has access to basic resources.

PROGRAM GOALS FOR 2025

The LABRE Program hopes to raise \$150,000 this year in order to fully fund one full-time attorney and paralegal, which may actually be divided among several people.

Another goal is for the program to branch out into representing noncitizens before Social Security and other federal agencies. There is a gap in service for noncitizens because current federal funding for nonprofit legal providers specifically excludes noncitizens. Given that Miami has a unique, aging immigrant population that is technically eligible for public benefits, there is going to be a growing need for representation in this area.

How can you help? – it’s important to understand how much of the homeless problem in Miami-Dade County is due to bureaucratic processing requirements and delays. Those who want to help improve the homelessness issue in our community can donate to the program and can also advocate for universal ID cards and more user-friendly public benefits portals.

Catholic

Managed-Services Program

The Managed-Service Program provides low-cost and free legal services for clients who do not qualify under one of the agency's many grants. During the calendar year 2023, the Managed-Service Program ("MSP") provided 6,728 services. Approximately one-third were employment authorization (34%), attorney consultations (14%), TPS applications (10%), and Know your Rights Presentations (8%). The MSP also did a significant number of Humanitarian Parole CHNV applications (236), and Applications for Residence (95). We provided more than 86 different types of services under the Managed-Service Program in 2023.



Reunited – From Detention to Family Reunification

The program represents individuals in removal proceedings, including bond hearings. One man – “Papa Hien” – was apprehended and held by ICE at Krome SPC. He was separated from his family after his 13-year-old stepdaughter, who he had raised since she was a toddler, lied to the authorities about how he disciplined her. When the truth came to light during his bond hearing, our office successfully obtained a low bond on his behalf. Papa Hien is now reunited with his family while waiting for his next court hearing.

** AI-generated images; names changed for privacy.*

While most of the clients the program serves can afford a nominal fee for our services, capacity to assist clients on a pro bono basis would help reach those who are truly and completely destitute. We can accomplish that goal through the generous support of our donors and funders.

BROWARD Office



The Broward Office is more than just a legal service provider—it is a beacon of hope for immigrants navigating a complex system. Our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to ensure that individuals across Broward County, North Miami-Dade, Naples, Palm Beach County, and Central Florida receive the support they need. Every day, we witness the strength and resilience of those seeking a safer future, and we are honored to walk alongside them.

At the Broward Office, we provide comprehensive immigration services through a range of programs tailored to meet the diverse needs of our community. Whether guiding individuals through the first steps of their immigration journey or assisting them in achieving their final goal of U.S. citizenship, we are committed to supporting people from all backgrounds and financial circumstances.

Success stories

- **A Long-Awaited Green Card:** Since 1985, one of our clients has called the U.S. home. Thanks to our team's unwavering dedication, he finally obtained his Legal Permanent Residency—a dream decades in the making.
- **A Second Chance for a Colombian Family:** After years of persecution, a family seeking asylum were denied by the Immigration Judge. But we refused to give up and appealed to the BIA. Their case is now back in court for reconsideration in 2025.
- **Fighting for Fairness:** Sarbine, a Haitian citizen, US legal permanent resident since 1998, faced deportation after applying for naturalization. Our team secured a waiver for misrepresentation, preventing her removal to a country she barely remembers.
- **New Hope for TPS Holders:** Before recent policy changes, many Venezuelans and Haitians with TPS faced deportation. We fought for the dismissal of their, allowing them to pursue asylum through USCIS and secure a better future.
- **A Holiday Reunion:** Nadia entered the U.S. as an asylee but had to leave unexpectedly when her mother became ill. Without proper documentation, she was stuck abroad. Our attorneys fought for her reentry, working with the Office of Refugee Resettlement to secure her return. Just in time for Christmas 2024, Nadia reunited with her son and husband.

Detained Persons

The Legal Orientation Program (LOP): A Lifeline for Detained Individuals

Every week, our attorneys enter the walls of Broward Transitional Center and Krome Processing Center, where fear and uncertainty loom large. Here, we offer more than just legal guidance—we offer a path forward.

In 2024, we reached approximately 500 individuals per month, helping 100-200 new participants understand their rights and options. Whether through General Orientations (GO), Individual Orientations (IO), or Pro Se Workshops (PSW), we empower detained individuals with the knowledge to navigate their cases.

Success Stories

- When Haiti's redesignation for TPS was announced, we didn't hesitate. We assisted with over 60 applications, ensuring individuals at BTC had the chance to be protected.
- For many, the difference between deportation and a second chance lies in legal representation. Our attorneys have successfully prepared parole and bond requests, fought for Friend of the Court cases, and won appeals that changed lives.
- The road hasn't been easy—gaining access to detention facilities was a major hurdle. But through persistent advocacy, we secured bi-weekly orientations at both centers, ensuring no one is left behind.

Looking Ahead

We are growing. With two staff attorney positions open, we aim to expand our reach and serve even more individuals in need of legal representation. The demand is high, and our commitment remains unwavering.

At the Broward Office, we don't just provide legal services—we change lives. Thank you for supporting our mission to bring justice, security, and hope to those who need it most.

Serving the Servants Immigration Program



The Serving the Servants Immigration Program (SSIP) enables CCLS to continue its mission by demonstrating support towards the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. The SSIP assists the Archdiocese of Miami, many other dioceses, eparchies, religious institutes, religious organizations, and charitable organizations with their immigration needs. The SSIP provides legal representation and assistance in bringing foreign-born priests, religious men and women, ministers, and seminarians from around the globe for formation, education, and/or ministry. It also provides legal representation and assistance for those who are currently present in the United States and assists with student visas. The SSIP provides consultation on religious immigration matters, representation of clients as necessary, preparation of various forms, and ongoing management of cases.

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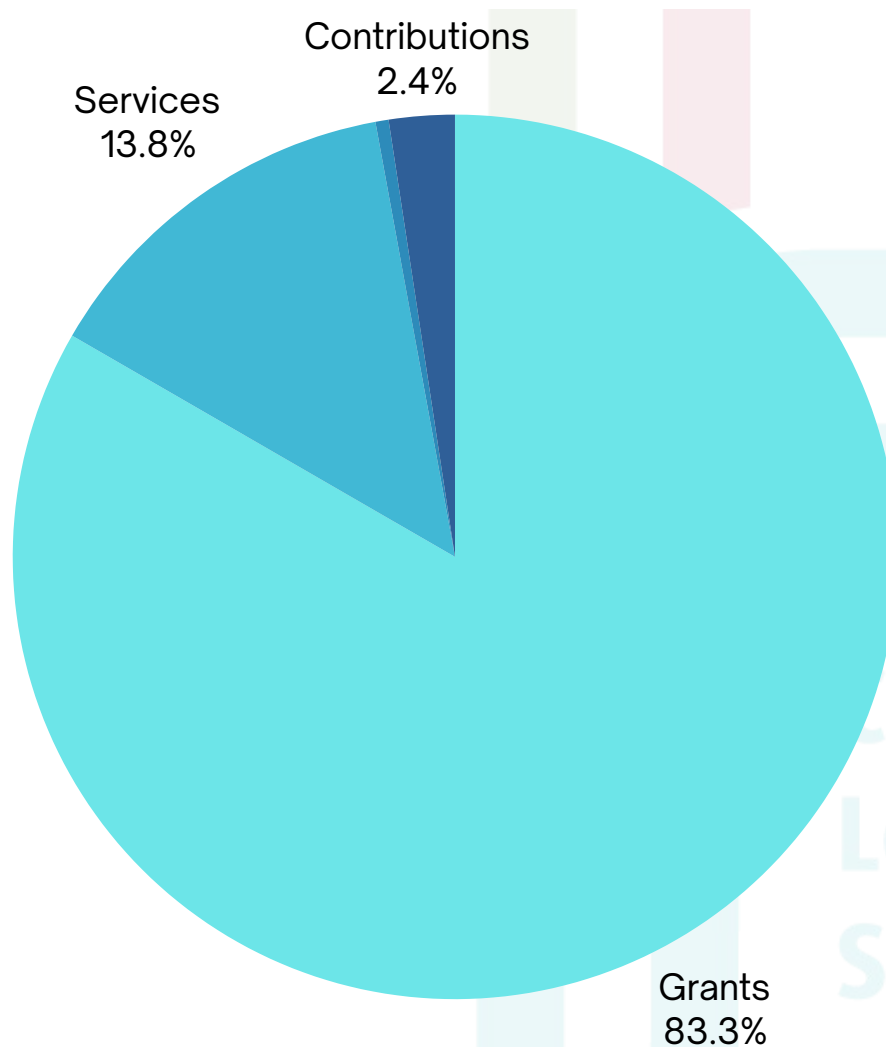
Eduardo J. Siman
Treasurer



Peterson St. Philippe, Esq.
Treasurer

Financials

REVENUES	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Grants	\$4,714,831	\$942,973	\$5,657,804
Services	\$935,788	-	\$935,788
Fundraising	\$32,682	-	\$32,682
Contributions	\$138,106	\$24,700	\$162,806
Interest	\$97	-	\$97
Net asset released from restriction	\$542,161	(\$542,161)	-
	\$6,363,665	\$425,512	\$6,789,177



Catholic
Legal
Services

Financials

EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES:

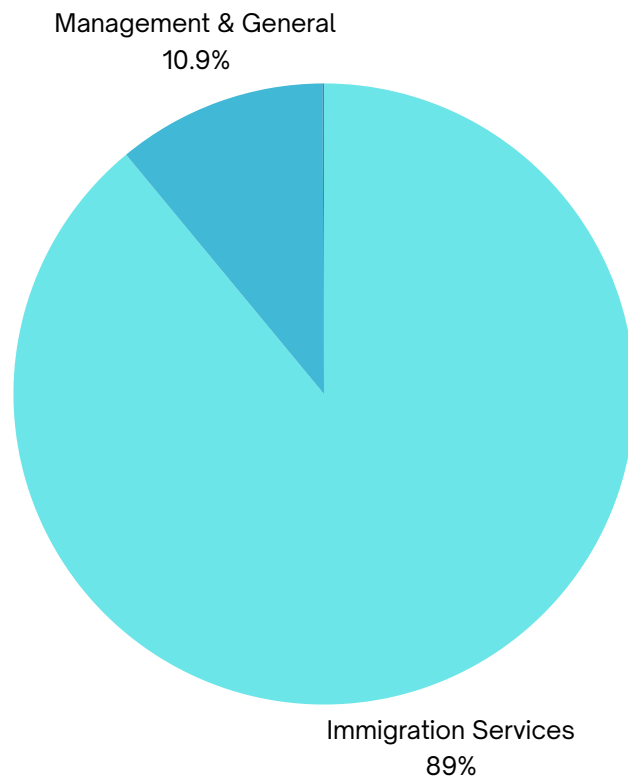
• Immigration Services	\$5,004,334	-	\$5,004,334
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES:	\$5,004,334	-	\$5,004,334

SUPPORTING SERVICES:

• Management & General	\$613,697	-	\$613,697
• Fundraising	\$4,390	-	\$4,390
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES:	\$618,087	-	\$618,087

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,622,421	-	\$5,622,421
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Change in Net Assets	\$741,244	\$435,512	\$1,166,756
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$871,253	\$56,173	\$929,426
Net Assets - End of Year	\$1,612,497	\$483,685	\$2,096,182





A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

CATHOLIC LEGAL SERVICES,
ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

MYRIAM MÉZADIEU

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is with deep gratitude and heartfelt pride that I share this reflection with you. The stories, milestones, and data presented in this report are more than a snapshot of our work—they are a testament to the power of faith in action, and to the transformative impact of your support.

At Catholic Legal Services, we continue to stand at the intersection of law, compassion, and justice—serving immigrants, refugees, and vulnerable families who come to us seeking hope and protection. Every individual we assist carries a story of courage and resilience, and it is our honor to walk alongside them.

Our work is not possible without you. Whether you contributed your time, resources, prayers, or voice, your partnership has helped extend our reach and deepen our impact. Because of you, more people are receiving legal guidance, more families are finding stability, and more communities are being empowered.

As we move forward, we remain steadfast in our mission to ensure access to justice for all—especially those who have been marginalized or forgotten. Together, we are building something stronger: a community that welcomes, protects, and uplifts.

On behalf of the entire Catholic Legal Services family, thank you. Your belief in our mission sustains us, and your generosity propels us.

With deep appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Myriam Mézadieu', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Myriam Mézadieu
Chief Operating Officer
Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**Catholic
Legal
Services**

ARCHDIOCESE
OF MIAMI, INC.